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Veröffentlichungsversion / Published Version

Arbeitspapier / working paper

Empfohlene Zitierung / Suggested Citation:

Hauff, L. v. (2015). *The Value of Alternatives: Why the EU is Indispensable to Central Asian Security*. (DGAP-Analyse, 8). Berlin: Forschungsinstitut der Deutschen Gesellschaft für Auswärtige Politik e.V.. <https://nbn-resolving.org/urn:nbn:de:0168-ssoar-55733-7>

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The Value of Alternatives: **Why the EU is Indispensable to Central Asian Security**

Luba von Hauff

The security risks of post-Soviet Central Asia are pronounced and therefore present on the agendas of most international actors, including the US, Russia, and China. The EU is also concerned, although it has hitherto not been known for political success in the region, especially in terms of security. Indeed, the EU's approach to the region – oriented toward transformation, liberalization, and democratization – has been largely labeled a failure, with minimal impact and progress. Against this background, this article will review and discuss the nature of the threats to Central Asia's security, establish the extent of the EU's actual "failure" by examining the distinct characteristics of the EU's security approach, and, finally, reflect on how European policy can have an impact on the local security situation in the future.

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The Value of Alternatives: Why the EU is Indispensable to Central Asian Security

Luba von Hauff

Introduction

In post-Soviet Central Asia – the region spanning Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan – a host of economic and geopolitical opportunities come face to face with pressing security challenges. A region steeped in tradition, Central Asia has long served as a land bridge and transport route connecting Asia, the Middle East, and Europe. It has substantial and sought-after raw materials at its disposal, from hydrocarbon and water resources to ferrous and non-ferrous metals, among other commodities. Moreover, the countries of Central Asia serve as comparatively loyal allies to the international community in efforts to stabilize Afghanistan, through their participation in the Northern Distribution Network (NDN). At the same time, however, the region faces substantial threats to domestic and transnational security: flourishing transnational crime (notably arms and drug trafficking), governmental and social instability, and growing “Islamization” of the traditionally secular populations.¹ In this regard, a pronounced role in inciting regional instability is often attributed to neighboring Afghanistan, which has become even more fragile and prone to Islamic extremism since the withdrawal of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in 2014.

Central Asia’s most influential neighbors are two of today’s significant non-Western powers: Russia and China. Although their approaches differ – Russia pursues a prominent political-military role in the region, while Beijing focuses on the developmental aspects of security – both actors consider Central Asian security to be a priority, particularly in terms of protecting the region from possible spillover from instability to the south.² To this end, both “authoritarian great powers” maintain close bi- and multilateral ties with Central Asia’s equally authoritarian states, aiming to stabilize the local regimes – in other words, to consolidate the local political status quo.³

The subject of Central Asian security is important to the European Union as well. Like Russia and China, the EU regards the possibility of (Afghanistan-induced)

Islamic extremism and the ensuing radicalization of post-Soviet Central Asia’s traditionally secular populations as key threats to regional security.⁴ Like the strategies of Russia and – especially – China, moreover, the EU’s Central Asia Strategy is marked by a developmental approach, with particular emphasis on building social, economic, and technical capacity. The EU’s progress report on Central Asia, echoing the Chinese approach of enhancing security through development, states that “EU interests in the Central Asian region are best served by promoting comprehensive security and development, which are interlinked and mutually reinforcing.”⁵

Despite the outward similarity of objectives (regional security and stability) and approaches (capacity building and socio-economic development), however, there is a pronounced factual discrepancy between Russian and Chinese engagement on the one hand, and European engagement on the other. This is because the EU, unlike Russia and China, views its efforts to create regional security through a liberal-democratic lens, putting particular focus on the human dimension and the transformation of local authoritarian structures – something that, *prima facie*, is profoundly out of tune with the survival instincts of Central Asia’s post-Soviet governments and their powerful neighbours.

This article explores whether and to what extent the EU’s distinct “transformation-oriented” approach impedes its security ambitions in Central Asia.⁶ The objective here is to assess the potential for European impact in a region that is in many ways quite adverse to the “import” of Western norms and to investigate whether and how the EU may contribute to security and help the region’s governments address local instability. The remainder of the analysis will elaborate on these issues. It will discuss threats coming from Afghanistan as well as locally bred dangers; put these into the context of the EU’s Central Asia Strategy; highlight, in turn, the latter’s potential for impact on local patrimonial-authoritarian structures; and, in conclusion, reflect on the European ability to influence the local security situation for the time to come.

Transnational Threats in Local Perspective

The fear of regional destabilization induced by Afghanistan is widespread. The official Central Asian position, especially of those countries sharing borders with Afghanistan, is unequivocal: militant Islamist infiltration is regarded as the most dangerous threat to regional security. And indeed, this threat should not be underestimated. Several professionally advanced Afghanistan- and Pakistan-based terrorist groups are focused on Central Asia and active in the greater region. These include Jund al-Khilafa, the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU), and the Islamic Jihadist Union (IJU), among others. As the infiltrations into Tajikistan in 2009–10, the attacks in Kazakh cities in 2011, and the suicide bombing in northern Tajikistan in 2013 have demonstrated, radical groups, most of them based in Afghanistan, could pose a real threat to Central Asia – through incursions as well as through local cells, which are most prevalent in the northern provinces of Tajikistan but are also present elsewhere in the region.⁷

Central Asia's governments also regard the continuously growing prominence of Islam among the region's secular populations through the prism of Afghanistan-induced threats. To be sure, the extent of this "Islamization" varies considerably in the respective states. The Tajik and Uzbek peoples have traditionally been more devout than their formerly nomadic Kazakh and Kyrgyz neighbors, and they remain so today. Nevertheless, a general trend is present: more than two decades after the end of the Soviet Union, the recourse of the region's societies to "authentic" Islamic norms and rules to structure their day-to-day lives is effectively increasing.⁸ While here, too, the factor of Afghanistan should not be underestimated, the growing popularity of Islamic teachings should be assessed within the local, Central Asian, context as well. This is because it is at the domestic level that outside influences can be embraced or repelled – the dissemination of ideas only works in a locally receptive environment. Receptivity, in turn, represents a function of the state-society relationship, which in Central Asia's case is problematic because highly exclusive in nature.

Indeed, political power in today's Central Asia remains weakly institutionalized, which means that although state institutions are present they are often bypassed when it comes to decision making. Instead, power is exercised in a vertical and informal manner, often through the personal relationships of a nation's leader. Hence, the political systems of all Central Asian nations are characterized by a pronounced weakness of the rule of law and, accordingly, by a high degree of corruption – that

is, by the distribution of state resources (administrative status as well as financial means) in exchange for loyalty. Such systems require a strong – by Western standards, authoritarian – leader, who is accepted as a credible and legitimate interlocutor among the "elites" (those interest groups through which power is exercised) and, importantly, a population that is closely tied to, and controlled by, the state. Indeed, a state-controlled population is an important systemic prerequisite, because an independent and self-organized civil society would disturb and thus endanger the distributional processes within the patrimonial system, and with it, its "stability." It is this point – the local elites' understanding of "stability" as the regime's control over state institutions, state resources, and society – that underlines the legacy (and continued presence) of Soviet political culture.⁹

The systematic exclusion as practiced by Central Asia's regimes alienates the population and creates a breeding ground for social instability – for social, economic, as well as political-ideological reasons. Indeed, in spite of a slight elevation of the consumption-related standard of living since the region's countries achieved independence from the USSR, citizens, especially outside energy-rich Kazakhstan, have suffered from a deterioration of basic state services such as education, (affordable) health care, social protection, and adequate housing, among other things. They have witnessed the decay of Central Asia's old, Soviet-installed infrastructure, which has not been adequately replaced – from schools and hospitals to roads.¹⁰ Lastly, and with the qualified exception of Kazakhstan, the region's governments, functioning within their fenced-off, patrimonial structures, have largely failed to provide a political-ideological vision for domestic development that can inspire hope for and trust in a better future. All of this has contributed to a declining sense of government legitimacy within the local populations and, in turn, fanned social upheaval across the region – in Kyrgyzstan (2005; 2010), Uzbekistan (2005), Kazakhstan (2011), and Tajikistan (2010, 2012). Indeed, while their respective domestic backgrounds differ, all these instances of unrest share two factors: dysfunctional state-society relationships, and the population's desire (as yet prevalently secularly motivated) for structural transformation and socio-economic and political inclusion.

It is precisely against this background that the issue of "Islamization" of local populations needs to be viewed. Indeed, dissatisfaction with incumbent power structures has not only heightened the propensity toward (violent) protests but also the attractiveness of alternative – Islamic – models of social and political organization. In

other words, weak rule of law, socio-economic deprivation, and political repression have fuelled the demand within society for genuinely binding norms, guidelines, and rules, thus increasing the receptivity to numerous aspects of Islamic teachings, including the non-spiritual ones. For these reasons, a second post-Soviet wave of “Islamic revival” has been taking place throughout the region.¹¹ It takes various forms, from spiritual pursuits to welfare- and community-oriented projects to politically driven activism. To a significant extent, this revival has taken place outside of the official, government-sponsored religious sphere, as illustrated by the growing number of semi-legal and underground Islamic charities, educational facilities, NGOs, and even political groups on the ground.¹²

While not a danger per se, societal “Islamization” may eventually exacerbate the risk of regional instability in conjunction with local populations’ sense of alienation from the state, as socio-economic and ideological vacuums may be filled by alternatives – by Islamic groups, for example, that provide vital social, educational, and economic assistance to those parts of society that are (or feel) neglected by the local political structures.¹³ In other words, the local sense of alienation may yield the very socio-economic grievances that are eventually taken up by religiously-politically driven “alternative” groups, who adapt their strategies to each country’s respective problems.¹⁴ It is thus that, in the mind-sets of local citizens, significant areas of government responsibility – in terms of state and, especially, of nation building – may start to recede.¹⁵

At this point, the circle between the dangers posed by Afghanistan and the behavior of the region’s regimes closes – highlighting the extent to which the actions of the latter can in fact determine the degree to which externally induced religious-ideological threats may become entrenched at a local level. To be sure, Afghanistan’s contribution to Central Asian instability should not be underestimated, as there are obvious geographic, ethnic, (illicit) economic, and some new ideological-religious connections.¹⁶ Above all, however, the repressiveness and corruption of Central Asian regimes actively contribute to creating regional instability. By largely inspiring feelings of exclusion and alienation among the region’s populations, they pave the way for social (violent) radicalization – be that radicalization “imported” from Afghanistan or home grown. This is especially this case in the more devout and repressed societies of Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. Therefore: the threat from Afghanistan is undoubtedly real, but it is at the local level that transnational threats

will succeed or fail to take hold. In consequence, for the time to come, the threat of radical extremism emanating from Afghanistan will only be as dangerous as the Central Asian regimes allow it to be.

The EU in Central Asia: A Policy of “No Impact”?

Considering the degree to which citizens’ dissatisfaction with the effectiveness of local governments fuels its susceptibility to radical, extremist alternatives, the EU’s comprehensive approach to Central Asian security is in fact of significant value. The EU Central Asia Strategy provides cooperation mechanisms and builds capacity in specialized areas such as border management (BOMCA) and trafficking (CADAP). More importantly, it emphasizes the human dimension of security, promoting initiatives to strengthen the functionality of Central Asian states and, with it, stability – in the European sense of the word. To this end, the strategy’s approach is multipronged: to support development of formal state institutions through the EU Rule of Law Initiative; to promote socio-economic development through specialized education, infrastructure, and environmental programs as well as through enhanced economic cooperation; to encourage social activism through the EU-Central Asia Human Rights Dialogue and support local civil society organizations, establishing mechanisms for exchange with their local representatives.¹⁷ In short, the EU’s approach addresses the social aspects of (in)security, pointing to the links between government behavior, societal inclusion, and stability, and providing instruments for improvement.

The local regimes have thus far shunned the EU-proposed path of structural transformation – at least in measurable terms.¹⁸ Instead, they have shown a marked preference for the approaches promoted by Russia and China, which emphasize regime security over good governance. Following the Chinese and Russian line allows Central Asia’s current regimes to maintain their traditional patrimonial-authoritarian structures while enjoying significant infrastructure investments – with no (politically transformative) strings attached. This apparent rejection of the EU’s approach has prompted some EU observers to criticize Brussels for “failing to leave a mark” on the region’s security architecture.¹⁹ Such disappointment, however, is premature; the EU’s policy of long-term stabilization is more than a function of linear socio-economic and political progress. Put differently, the lack of measurable progress in internationally set governance indicators does not rule out the effectiveness of EU policy

in the long term, for the approach also promotes specific aspects that cannot easily be measured to be included in international rankings. In this regard, the extent to which local populations feel involved in the political process – that is, their perception of the state-society relationship – is particularly salient. And indeed, there have been limited but significant changes echoing the expectations of the EU over the past years, at least in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, the region's more open nations.

In Kyrgyzstan since 2010 – that is, after the ouster of Kurmanbek Bakiyev and the outbreak of severe ethnic clashes – the government has largely resisted the urge to clamp down on social activists (a practice all too familiar from Soviet times). Though the country maintains its traditionally poor record on all other indicators of good governance, this is still an encouraging sign. To be sure, Kyrgyz civil society has been and remains vulnerable to occasional legislative attacks and intimidation by security services, especially in the sensitive field of ethnic relations. At the same time, NGOs have been increasingly able to respond to harassment, “whether by acting locally or communicating their grievances to the international community.”²⁰ In spite of occasional setbacks, Kyrgyz civil society has thus been relatively successful in strengthening its presence within the country's generally fragile political system – providing channels for the majority population to call attention to and seek governmental remedies for their grievances on the ground.²¹ This would not have been possible without the tacit acceptance of the government.

The relationship between the Kazakh state and Kazakh civil society has experienced a different, albeit still constructive dynamic in terms of developing a more viable – inclusive – state-society relationship. To be sure, since the Zhanaozen riots in 2011, the government has been following the pattern learned during Soviet times of increasing state control over society, rendering independent activism in sensitive policy realms ever more limited.²² However, it simultaneously enhanced the room and financial support for civil engagement in those areas that it deemed politically “safe.” Accordingly, it has increasingly summoned domestic organizations – often referred to as GONGOs (“government-organized non-governmental organizations”) – to address a substantial number of social, economic, ethnic, and also environment-related grievances that abound on the ground.²³ While it clearly failed to enhance individual political freedom, this policy nonetheless contributed to enhancing the public's general perception of being included. What is more, in 2013, the Kazakh government developed a state program for “fight-

ing religious extremism and terrorism,” which emphasized the necessity of involving Kazakh citizens in this process. More concretely, the intent here was to shore up the “civil position” of the “Kazakh people” against radical ideologies by improving state-society dialogue and public education.²⁴ Despite its extensive top-down approach and the fact that it was a largely rhetorical gesture, this strategy marked the government's first instance of admitting society into the hitherto exclusively governmental realm of security.

The Kyrgyz and Kazakh regimes have thus been implementing domestic measures to reduce societal exclusion in past years, trying to improve state-society relations and, with it, the security outlook. By Western standards such measures were certainly flawed; they were largely state-controlled, had little impact on policy making or on the extent of local socio-economic deprivation, and were accompanied by restrictive government measures in other social realms.²⁵ And yet, they did (and do) actively address some social grievances, providing channels for citizens to voice (limited) dissent and opposition as well as to seek remedies. In this way, and from a local point of view, these European-inspired measures enhanced societal visibility and bestowed a more positive dynamic on the state-society relationship. The comparatively high resilience of Kyrgyz and Kazakh societies toward politically motivated Islamic movements and the prevalence of moderate, non-political, welfare- and community-oriented groups testify to this, demonstrating that the idea of security as a function of the governments' treatment of society has been heard.

The EU's Role in Central Asian Security: Which Way Forward?

“Russia has political-military leverage in Central Asia. China brings in considerable investment. What does Europe have?” This question was asked during a conference exploring the EU's role in Central Asia's post-2014 security architecture. Suggestive as it was, it highlighted one point in particular: the EU has neither the power-political clout of Russia and China nor can it spare the institutional mechanisms and financial resources of these countries. It therefore cannot promote geopolitical imperatives in the region to the same extent that Moscow and Beijing can. This does not mean, however, that the EU has no role whatsoever in the region's security. Quite the opposite. The EU can have a distinct impact on Central Asian security – although its policy is widely perceived as ineffective in measurable terms. It can provide alternatives.

Indeed, the presence of the EU in Central Asia, especially within the format of the Human Rights Dialogue and the Rule of Law Initiative, allows local governments to get acquainted with new approaches and reconsider security challenges from perspectives they do not get to see in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO), and other regional forums. For example, it allows them to cultivate the linkage between state behavior and security, and to develop national policies that take these new insights into account. Here the EU has been successful, at least in part. In Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan, some aspects of the EU approach have been taken into account as solutions to local problems – in spite of their apparent incompatibility with domestic realities. It remains to be seen whether the Kazakh and Kyrgyz governments' tentative change of mind will influence the more repressive governments of Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, where the populations are traditionally more devout and hence – due to the combination of religiosity and government repression – more receptive to radical Islamic alternatives. Nevertheless, the first incremental steps toward more constructive state-society relations have been made in the region – at least in two Central Asian states. This may in turn facilitate similar changes in the region as a whole.

However, the extent and sustainability of EU influence not only depend on the willingness of Central Asia's governments to undertake reforms, but also – and significantly – on Brussels's willingness to approach the local regimes in a more mindful way in terms of the region's political legacy and also in terms of the constraints induced by its vicinity. Brussels needs to invest more time and resources into explaining the usefulness of structural transformation and with it, the uses of political liberalization in general. Local governments will struggle to listen to EU measures – and especially to implement them – if they do not understand their actual value and utility. In this regard, local governments would not regard the creation of closer partnerships with the EU as a significant incentive for undertaking transformation. This is not only because any closer partnership with the EU lacks the option of eventual accession to the Union, but also because these countries already have strong bilateral economic ties to individual EU member states (especially in the case of Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan); because EU funds have flowed into the region despite minimal progress on the ground (especially in the case of Tajikistan and Uzbekistan); and not least because of China's pronounced (and growing) economic presence in the region.²⁶ In other words, the EU must be even more vigor-

ous about highlighting the fundamental linkage between structural transformation, the state-society relationship, and security.

In addition to explaining the value of structural transformation, the EU should adjust its expectations to reflect the region's actual structural and geopolitical capabilities. It should allow for the "localization" of its ideas – for the local construction of locally acceptable forms of socio-political inclusion (and other concepts). Indeed, it is the process of translating a foreign norm into a particular domestic context that enhances that norm's domestic legitimacy – its embeddedness within the system, if you will – and thus also enhances the openness of local authorities to further experiences with other norms. Accepting localization, in turn, requires Brussels's reevaluation of what constitutes "success" and "failure" when dealing with Central Asia's post-Soviet autocracies. That is, it depends on a better differentiation between the realization of EU benchmarks on the one hand and the genuine encouragement of "locally owned" transformation on the other. Put differently, European actors and observers will need to accept that a lack of domestic change of the sort expected in the West need not necessarily imply that the European understanding of security as a whole has failed to resonate with Central Asia's regimes. Rather, as the cases of Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan suggest, it may resonate in a different – Central Asian – manner, and still, quietly, contribute to a better climate between the state and society and thus to an improved local security environment.

To conclude, the Kyrgyz and Kazakh cases show that Central Asia's states are not immune to transformation, even though it takes forms that differ from what Western observers and policy makers expect. These governments have adjusted the European understanding of human security (and the inherent notion of socio-political inclusion) to meet local (governmental) sensitivities and needs. They have translated a European idea into their local contexts and developed a Central Asian model of inclusiveness aiming at a locally "appropriate" improvement of the state-society relationship – one that resonates with the local political culture, which is in many respects still shaped by the Soviet experience. In other words, the Kyrgyz and Kazakh governments engaged in the localization of (parts of) the European understanding of security: they complemented their existing, authoritarian-patrimonial political framework with a new option, which they considered potentially stabilizing – enhanced social inclusion – without threatening the security of their regimes through short-term fundamental socio-political transformation.

It is at this point that the limits as well as the actual value of EU engagement in Central Asia crystallize – especially vis-à-vis Russia's and China's "stabilizing" engagement. Due to the constraints of political structures and vicinity, the EU's impact on local security through socio-political transformation is bound to be rather low – at least in measurable terms and in the short term. Nevertheless, EU presence in the region is of significant value, as it endows local regimes, especially those that are more open to the diffusion of norms, with more than just benchmarks for "appropriate behavior"; it provides alternative options for dealing with long-known problems – options that the Central Asian governments are not likely to learn from their neighbors Russia and China, who are far more interested in promoting the status quo and, in doing so, actually fail to promote long-term regional security, at least from a Western point of view.

The European understanding of security emphasizes the link between state behavior and security outcomes. It also highlights the correlation between socio-political inclusion, the resilience of society, and the potential for (foreign) radical ideologies to gain a foothold within the region's traditionally largely secular societies. In this, the European approach not only addresses a root cause of Central Asian instability but, importantly, also contributes to raising post-Soviet governments' awareness about the human dimension of regional (in)security and their own responsibilities in this regard. And it is this awareness that is most urgently needed if Central Asia is to achieve security in the long term – with and without the dangers emanating from Afghanistan.

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Notes

- For a detailed analysis of Central Asian issues of insecurity, see Philip Shishkin, "Central Asia's Crisis of Governance," in *Asia Society/Central Asia Report* (Washington, DC, 2012) <http://asia-society.org/files/pdf/120215_central_asia_crisis_governance.pdf> (accessed July 31, 2015); International Crisis Group, *Central Asia: Decay and Decline* (Bishkek/Brussels, 2011); Sébastien Peyrouse et al., *Security and Development in Central Asia: The EU compared to China and Russia*, CEPS (The Centre for European Policy Studies), EUCAM Working Paper 11 (2012).
- On China's role in Central Asia, see Luba von Hauff "A Stabilizing Neighbor? The Impact of China's Engagement in Central Asia on Regional Security," DGAPanalyse 3 (2013); Thomas Ambrosio, "Catching the Shanghai Spirit: How the Shanghai Cooperation Organization Promotes Authoritarian Norms in Central Asia," *Europe-Asia Studies* 8 (2008). On the role of Russia, also relating to the newly launched Eurasian Economic Union, see József Lang and Nico Popsecu, "Central Asia: The View from Russia," *ISSUE Alert* 1 (2015); Nico Popsecu, "Eurasian Union: The Real, the Imaginary, and the Likely," *ISSUE Chaillot Paper* 132 (2014). For an overview of Central Asian multilateral forums, see Sébastien Peyrouse and Marlene Laruelle, "Regional Organizations in Central Asia: Patterns of Interaction, Dilemmas of Efficiency," University of Central Asia, Institute of Public Policy and Administration Working Paper 10 (2012).
- See Azar Gat, "The Return of Authoritarian Great Powers," *Foreign Affairs*, July/August, 2007. Turkmenistan is the only Central Asian nation that is not a member of any multilateral security organization in the region. It is, however, closely intertwined with Russia and China in bilateral terms.
- See Council of the European Union, *The EU and Central Asia: Strategy for a New Partnership* (Brussels, 2007); Council of the European Union, *Council Conclusions on Central Asia* (Luxembourg, June 25, 2012); European Union External Action Service Press Release, "EU-Central Asia High Level Security Dialogue Takes Place in Dushanbe," March, 11, 2015 <http://eeas.europa.eu/statements-eeas/2015/150311_01_en.htm> (accessed July 31, 2015).
- European External Action Service, *Progress Report on the Implementation of the EU Strategy for Central Asia* (Brussels, 2012). On China's interpretation of "security through development," see Evan S. Medeiros, *China's International Behavior: Activism, Opportunism, and Diversification* (Santa Monica, 2009); Robert Sutter, *Chinese Foreign Relations: Power and Policy Since the Cold War* (Lanham, MD, 2007).
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- Jacob Zenn, "Militants Threaten to Return to Central Asia after NATO's Withdrawal from Afghanistan," *Eurasia Daily Monitor*, January 14, 2013; Mark Vinson, "IMU Crackdown Reveals Regional Dynamics in Tajikistan's Ferghana Valley," *Eurasia Daily Monitor*, February 7, 2013; Bayram Balci and Didier Chaudet, *Jihadism in Central Asia: A Credible Threat after the Western Withdrawal from Afghanistan?* Carnegie Endowment for International Peace (2012).
- Islam's growing attractiveness is particularly observable in Kyrgyzstan. See Chris Rickleton, "Kyrgyzstan: Islamic Kindergartens Fill Growing Demand," *Eurasianet*, April 20, 2015 <<http://www.eurasianet.org/node/73051>> (accessed July 31, 2015); Eric McGlinchey, "Islamic Revivalism and State Failure in Kyrgyzstan," *Problems of Post-Communism* (May/June 2009), pp. 16ff.
- See Freedom House, "Freedom in the World 2014," p. 1 <<http://www.freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world/freedom-world-2014>> (accessed July 31, 2015); Daniel Kaufmann et al., "Worldwide Governance Indicators: Country Data for Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan 2005–2012" <<http://info.worldbank.org/governance/wgi/index.aspx#countryReports>> (accessed July 31, 2015).
- Hauff, "A Stabilizing Neighbor," pp. 4–5.
- The breakdown of the Soviet Union induced the first Islamic revival in post-communist Central Asia, which took place across all strata of the region's population and was endorsed by the local governments.
- See Hauff, "A Stabilizing Neighbor"; Sébastien Peyrouse, "Central Asia: Mismanaging Religion," *EurasiaNet Commentary*, May 8, 2015 <<http://www.eurasianet.org/node/73351>> (accessed July 31, 2015); Emmanuel Karagiannis, "Hizb-ut Tahrir as a Social Movement Organization," in *Political Islam in Central Asia: The challenge of Hizb ut-Tahrir*, ed. E. Karagiannis (Central Asian Studies) (London, 2012). For alternative views, see John Heathershaw and David W. Montgomery, "The Myth of Post-Soviet Muslim Radicalization in the Central Asian Republics," Chatham House, 2014.
- Hauff, "A Stabilizing Neighbor"; Peyrouse, "Central Asia: Mismanaging Religion," 2015; Karagiannis, "Hizb-ut Tahrir."
- Karagiannis, "Hizb-ut Tahrir"; Kathleen Collins, "Ideas, Networks, and Islamist Movements: Evidence from Central Asia and the Caucasus," *World Politics* 1, 2007, p. 65.

- 15 According to the International Crisis Group, a further implication of the local conditions and their socio-economic and ideational repercussions is a growing number of Central Asians leaving their home countries to “fight (for) or otherwise support” the so-called Islamic State in Syria and Iraq. See ICG, “Syria Calling: Radicalization in Central Asia,” Europe and Central Asia Briefing 72 (2015).
- 16 Balci and Chaudet, *Jihadism in Central Asia*.
- 17 Council of the European Union, The EU and Central Asia, 2007.
- 18 “Freedom in the World 2014”; Kaufmann et al., Worldwide Governance Indicators.
- 19 Melvin, “Values-Based Realism.”
- 20 See Erica Marat, “Nations in Transit 2014: Kyrgyzstan,” Freedom House, Washington, DC, 2015 <https://freedomhouse.org/sites/default/files/14.%20NIT14_Kyrgyzstan_final.pdf> (accessed July 31, 2015).
- 21 Ibid. p. 347
- 22 Luba von Hauff, “Kasachstan,” in *Aussenpolitik mit Autokratien*, ed. Josef Braml et al. (Oldenbourg, 2014); “Protection of Fundamental Rights in Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, and Turkmenistan: Update on Developments in April–June 2014,” Kazakhstan International Bureau For Human Rights and Rule of Law, July 17, 2014 <http://www.bureau.kz/data.php?page=0n_id=7261&l=en> (accessed April 25, 2015).
- 23 Hauff, “Stabilizing Neighbor”; Gaziza Baituova, “Kazakh Government Falls Silent on NGO Law,” Kazakhstan International Bureau For Human Rights and Rule of Law <http://www.bureau.kz/data.php?n_id=7812&l=ru> (accessed July 31, 2015).
- 24 Roger McDermott, “Kazakhstan Unveils New Counter-Terrorism and Anti-Extremism Strategy,” *Eurasia Daily Monitor*, October 8, 2013 <http://www.jamestown.org/programs/edm/single/?tx_ttnews%5Btt_news%5D=41462&cHash=939309d2a1269d27fa14119c13651699#VVO29CnrWYU> (accessed July 31, 2015).
- 25 In Kyrgyzstan, pending restrictive measures include the resumption of a Moscow-inspired, controversial law that proposes to classify “non-commercial organizations that engage in ‘political activities’ and receive foreign funding” as “foreign agents.” See David Trilling, “Kyrgyzstan Debates Russian-style ‘Foreign Agents’ Law,” Eurasianet.org, December 1, 2014 <<http://www.eurasianet.org/node/71131>> (accessed July 31, 2015). In Kazakhstan, the 2011 Law on Religious Activities as well as the reformed Criminal Code (in force since January 2015) serve to restrict independent religious and civic activism. See “Shrinking Space for NGOs in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan,” in *Freedom from Torture Bulletin* 3, 2015.
- 26 On the allocation of EU funds between 2014 and 2020, see European External Action Service, *Multiannual Indicative Programme: Regional Central Asia 2014–2020* (Brussels, 2013).

